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# REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

## - UNCTAD's CONTRIBUTION TO THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

As indicated in the annotated provisional agenda (TD/B/1278), the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Least Developed Countries, adopted at their first meeting on 1 October 1990 and circulated to the General Assembly in document A/C.2/45/5, is attached hereto for background information.

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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Letter dated 2 October 1990 from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the Secretary-General transmitting the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Least Developed Countries

On behalf of the least developed countries members of the United Nations, I have the honour to state that the first meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the least developed countries was held at United Nations Headquarters on 1 October 1990 under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Mr. Hussain Muhammad Ershad, President of Bangladesh. The meeting adopted a Declaration, which is annexed herewith.

I have the honour to request you to arrange to have this letter and its annex distributed as an official document of the General Assembly under item 82 of the agenda.

(Signed) A. H. G. Mohiuddin
Permanent Representative

Annex

DECLARATION OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

The Heads of State and Government of the least developed countries, participating at the World Summit for Children, met at United Nations Headquarters on 1 October 1990 to review all aspects of the prevailing endemic development crisis in the least developed countries. Expressing their deep concern over the continuing deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the least developed countries, they noted that unabated decline in the standard of living in those countries and their deepening poverty posed a major challenge to the entire international community.

The Heads of State and Government noted that the current development impasse in the least developed countries, aggravated by a stagnating or declining flow of development resources, mounting external indebtedness, a resurgence of protectionist measures, a sharp decline in commodity prices and a secular decline in the terms of trade of the least developed countries was imposing intense strain on their political and social fabric.

The current turbulence on the intenational scene created by the Gulf crisis would make the development of the least developed countries an even more uphill task. The Heads of State and Government consequently urged the international community to undertake special measures on a priority basis to assist the least developed countries to cope with the resulting problems.

The Heads of State and Government underscored that the pressures on the least developed countries must be relieved by a decisive improvement in the pace and character of their development. They also noted that in order to reactivate growth and development in those countries, effective measures must be undertaken to overcome their most formidable structural handicaps and to relieve external constraints to their development. In that context, the Heads of State and Government welcomed the outcome of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s adopted by that Conference for the current decade.

The Heads of State and Government expressed their firm conviction that the international community, particularly the developed partners of the least developed countries, would fully implement the international support measures identified in the New Programme of Action to complement the national efforts of the least developed countries. They particularly appealed to the international community to enhance their contribution to the development of the least developed countries in all relevant sectors of their economies through greater support and assistance to those countries in the form of an enhanced flow of external resources for development, including foreign direct investment, effective and comprehensive debt relief measures to cover all types of debts, greater market access and new initiatives to compensate effectively for the shortfall in the export earnings of the least developed countries due to commodity price fluctuations.

The Heads of State and Government also noted that the United Nations and the organs, bodies, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system also had a special responsibility for the pursuit of the goals and objectives of the new Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. They urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations to mobilize all resources and undertake the necessary measures, in active collaboration with all relevant organs, bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, which would enable the entire system to live up to the challenge.

In particular, the Heads of State and Government emphasized that the Special Programme on the Least Developed Countries of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should be strengthened and upgraded so as to enable it fully and effectively to discharge its mandate as the focal point for global review and monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the 1990s.

The Heads of State and Government also urged all multilateral financial institutions, regional banks and other development funds to extend the necessary help to the least developed countries and to take into account the special needs of those countries in all their programmes and operations.

The Heads of State and Government also took note of and expressed their support for the decision of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to invite the General Assembly to consider inclusion of Namibia in the list of least developed countries.

Finally, the Heads of State and Government also commended the welcome initiative by all the least developed countries increasingly to co-ordinate their position to articulate effectively their various concerns and development priorities. They expressed the hope that efforts would continue to improve their present arrangement for co-ordinated action and also to widen the scope for such co-ordination within the United Nations system, the Group of 77 and other international fora.

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